

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REINTRODUCTION OF PEACE CORPS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2023

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today on National Peace Corps Day, I reintroduce the "Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023". Sixty-two years ago today, on March 1, 1961, President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps, and this legislation will enable the Peace Corps to continue their legacy. As the co-chair of the Congressional Peace Corps Caucus and the only returned Peace Corps volunteer serving in Congress, I know that this critical legislation will invigorate the Peace Corps and ensure that its essential work can continue to shape and inspire people around the world for years to come. I thank my colleagues Ranking Member GREGORY MEEKS (NY-05), Congressman GARRET GRAVES (LA-6), and Delegate AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN (R-AS) for being the bill's original cosponsors. I also appreciate Senate Foreign Relations Chairman ROBERT MENENDEZ and Ranking Member JIM RISCH for their leadership on the Senate companion bill in the 117th Congress and look forward to continuing this partnership.

President John F. Kennedy signed the Peace Corps Act into law to "permit our people to exercise more fully their responsibilities in the great common cause of world peace". He set out three goals: unpack your bag, live with and help meet the needs of your new community; in your new community work to create a better understanding of America by being the real face of America; and bring an understanding of the World back home.

My wife, Patti, and I answered JFK's call to service, beginning our careers in public service when we joined the Peace Corps as young married graduates fresh out of UC Berkeley. Our post was to a remote village in Western Ethiopia. We taught the 7th and 8th grades and engaged in community development.

Over 60 years since the first volunteer arrived in Liberia, more than 240,000 Americans have served in 142 countries. Over the years, volunteers advanced agriculture production, taught, provided medication education and health services, created cooperative road building, and brought every conceivable skill that every nation needed.

My bill, the bipartisan "Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023", builds upon the Sam Farr and Nick Castle Peace Corps Reform Act of 2018 and the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011; making critical reforms to the agency to support current and returned volunteers. It strengthens the protection of volunteers against reprisals or retaliations for reporting wrongdoing and increases the federal workers' compensation rate for all Peace Corps volunteers injured or disabled during their service.

In total, this bill would provide the necessary federal resources to better support international programs, and current, returning, and former Peace Corps volunteers. JFK gave the call to service, "ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country". It is truly an honor to reintroduce this legislation on National Peace Corps Day.

HONORING THE LIFE, SERVICE, AND SACRIFICE OF MAJOR GENERAL GARY LYNN HARRELL

HON. DIANA HARSHBARGER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life, service, and sacrifice of Major General Gary Lynn Harrell. The retired two-star Green Beret and legendary Delta Force Leader lost his hard-fought battle with cancer at the age of 71 and was called home to be with his savior.

Gary Harrell was born in Jonesborough, Tennessee to Henry and Louise Harrell. Tennessee mourns the loss of a dedicated patriot, loving father, husband, and friend; a truly inspirational man.

Major General Harrell lived a life that most of us have difficulty imagining. He hunted the Columbian drug lord, Pablo Escobar, led an operation to free American hostages from a prison in Panama, fought our enemies in the Gulf, Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan, commanded Delta Force operations, and simultaneously raised a family with his wife and high school sweetheart, Jennifer.

Harrell suffered severe injuries in 1993, serving during Operation Gothic, a manhunt for Somali warlords that led to the Battle of Mogadishu. He recovered from these injuries and rededicated himself to another 15 years in uniform, proving his heart for service was stronger than external challenges.

The men who served with Harrell during that operation remember him as a respected commander and a trusted leader, bringing commands together and leading with honor, quiet dignity, and valor.

Even after hanging up his uniform, Harrell continued to do good and give back, joining the board of Task Force Dagger Special Operations Foundation which aids wounded, ill, and injured operators and their families.

He also served on the board of the National Medal of Honor Heritage Center in Chattanooga and stayed active in communities close to home, chairing the Washington County Republican Party.

Gary was described by close friends and family as a "strong, Christian patriot" and a "giant among giants". He will be so dearly missed and fondly remembered.

May the legacy of Major General Gary Lynn Harrell live on in the hearts of those who loved him and served alongside him. May we always remember his courage, sacrifice, and dedication to this great Nation.

CELEBRATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TEXAS RANGERS

HON. CHIP ROY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Texas Rangers, Texas's oldest law enforcement agency.

In 1821, Stephen F. Austin, the "Father of Texas," brought 300 families to settle land in modern-day Texas. There was no regular army, so Austin assembled a fighting force to provide protection from Karankawas, Comanches, and eventually Mexican raiders—giving rise to the Texas Rangers.

Texans did what sovereign states have done throughout history: we stepped up and protected our communities. We stood up for the rule of law when there was none.

Much of the action seen by the early Rangers involved bloody conflicts with Comanche tribes and gangs of bandits who threatened the safety of Texans.

In the years following, the Rangers proved indispensable during major events such as the Mexican American War, the pursuit of criminals Bonnie and Clyde in 1934, and Hurricane Harvey rescue and recovery in 2017.

As local law enforcement slowly assumed much of the day-to-day peacekeeping role that the Texas Rangers held before the turn of the 20th century, the Texas Rangers now operate as a key investigative body for the State of Texas.

Rangers are renowned for conducting major criminal investigations, suppression of organized crime, border reconnaissance, SWAT, bomb squad, special rapid response, crisis negotiation, joint intelligence center management, and investigation of unsolved crimes.

The impact of the Texas Rangers on the Lone Star State cannot be understated. My home county, Hays County, is named for John Coffee Hays, a renowned Ranger appointed by Sam Houston. My great-great-grandfather John Vaughan Roy served as a Texas Ranger in Hays, Travis, and Blanco Counties, protecting our future home and holding the line against lawlessness.

To the west, Captain Charles Schreiner of Kerr County served with distinction and went on to donate land for the Schreiner Institute, a military school in my district. Today, I am honored to represent "Ranger Ray" Martinez, a living legend in New Braunfels with a long history of heroism and service. The Ranger spirit is also alive and well today in my friend and longtime Texas Ranger David Maxwell, who solved the over 35-year-old cold case in the unspeakable murder of his own sister.

"They were men who could not be stamped." That's how former DPS director, Homer Garrison, Jr. described them. And they have certainly lived up to that.

As with so many other great figures of our history, some today wish to rewrite the legacy

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